



# Seattle City Council

## Central Staff - Memorandum

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**Date:** August 5, 2015  
**To:** Education and Governance Committee  
**From:** Brian Goodnight, Council Central Staff  
**Subject:** CB 118462: North Highline Fire District Interlocal Agreement

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At its August 5 meeting, the Education and Governance Committee will consider Council Bill 118462 approving of an interlocal agreement with the North Highline Fire District. This memorandum provides a brief background on the Duwamish Annexation Area, highlights some of the terms of the proposed interlocal agreement, and lays out the timeline for next steps.

### **Duwamish Annexation Area Background**

In February 2014, the City Council adopted Resolution 31502 calling for the annexation, by election method, of the Duwamish Annexation Area. The Duwamish Annexation Area consists of two separate Potential Annexation Areas, as defined by the City's Comprehensive Plan: the Duwamish Industrial Triangle (designated in 1996) and the South Park "Sliver by the River" (designated in 2012). The area consists of approximately 220 acres and the 2010 Census stated a population of 177.

The Duwamish Annexation Area is located adjacent to and south of the South Park neighborhood, between the Duwamish River and State Route 99. North of the South Park Bridge, the area consists of mainly single family residences. South of the bridge, the area contains a marina, industrial and manufacturing uses, and the Seattle City Light Duwamish substation.

The City has reached agreements with King County on the operation and maintenance of the South Park Bridge, the King County Library System on the provision of library services, and has negotiated with the North Highline Fire District on the terms of the interlocal agreement to be considered with CB 118462. Future negotiations will be required for the continued provision of solid waste services (Waster Management), natural gas services (Puget Sound Energy), and cable television and internet services (Comcast).

### **Interlocal Agreement Terms**

The North Highline Fire District provides fire protection and emergency response services to the unincorporated North Highline area between the City of Burien and the City of Seattle, which includes the Duwamish Annexation Area. The District collects property taxes and benefit charges on property in its service area, and the successful annexation of the Duwamish Annexation Area by the City of Seattle would result in a loss of revenues to the District from this area.

The District has estimated that the reduction in revenues would result in the District having to lay off at least one firefighter and possibly one administrative position. Due to minimum staffing requirements, the loss of the firefighter position would force the District to remove one fire engine from service for approximately one-third of the time the District provides services.

To mitigate the loss in revenues stemming from the annexation, the interlocal agreement calls for the City to provide financial assistance to the District to ensure that adequate resources are available for the District to maintain its current staffing levels and provide fire protection and emergency response services to its remaining service area.

Exhibit B to the interlocal agreement provides a concise summary of the terms of the agreement, in the event of a successful annexation of the Duwamish Annexation Area. Some of the major provisions are as follows:

- The City will pay the District an amount (to be determined annually) the lesser of:
  - Combined amount generated in the area based on the District's property tax and benefit charge; or
  - Amount generated in the area based on the City's regular property tax rate.

In 2015 dollars, the estimated payment would be approximately \$145,000.

- The City will make payments (beginning after the effective date of the annexation) for a period not to exceed the lesser of:
  - 10 consecutive years; or
  - Upon the annexation of the remainder of the District's service area; or
  - Upon the annexation or assumption of the District's service area by another fire protection district.
- The District will support the City's proposed annexation of the area before the Washington State Boundary Review Board for King County and/or any other entity that has authority to approve or deny the proposed annexation.

### **Timeline & Next Steps**

The Boundary Review Board held a public hearing on the City's proposed annexation of the Duwamish Annexation Area on July 20, 2015 and received testimony from the City, King County, the North Highline Fire District, and members of the public.

Due to the pending agreement between the City and the North Highline Fire District (which was approved by the District's Board of Commissioners on July 22), the Board continued its hearing until August 13, 2015 in order to receive notice of the City's consideration of the interlocal agreement.

If the Board approves of the City's proposal, the Council will need to pass another resolution to put the annexation question to area voters at a special or regular election.